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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001109

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY

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SUBJECT: NCP OFFICIAL IMPLICATES U.S. IN ALLEGED COUP

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Classified By: CDA A. Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

Nafie Blames U.S. for Coup

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Influential regime hard-liner Nafie Ali Nafie has implicated the USG in a coup plot that the Sudanese Government claims to have disrupted on July 14. Speaking on Al Jazeera, the Presidential Assistant and former director of the security services accused the U.S. of supporting an attempt by Umma Reform and Renewal Party leader Mubarak Al Fadil and a group of retired military officers to perpetrate acts of sabotage in Khartoum, including the assassination of high-level government officials. Alleged to be operating under the moniker of the "United National Front," Al Fadil and 17 others were arrested on July 14, according to local press reports.

[¶2.](#) (SBU) During the regular July 15 Council of Ministers meeting, Minister of the Interior Al Zubeir Bashir Taha said that the conspirators had divided the capital into four districts and had planned to foment chaos in Khartoum that would spread to other parts of the country and collapse the regime. Taha alleged that the coup plotters had supplied weapons to an unspecified group of Darfur rebels. With the exception of the National Congress Party (NCP), no political party in Sudan has condemned the coup, including the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

Libyan Link?

[¶3.](#) (SBU) On July 14, Deputy Director General of the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) Mohammed Atta claimed that the conspirators had sought Libyan backing but that Tripoli had notified the Sudanese authorities. Atta reversed himself on July 15, claiming instead that the security services had been tracking the plot since April--without the assistance of foreign governments--and intervened 24 hours before it was set in motion. (Note: A 1976 coup by the "National Front" against Jaffar Nimeiri's government had received Libyan backing. The "National Front" had consisted of an alliance among the National Islamic Front (NIF) of Hassan Turabi and the Umma Party led by Sadiq Al Mahdi, which had included Al Fadil at that time. End note.)

Government Names Seven Conspirators

¶4. (SBU) The Government has released the names of six conspirators, in addition to Al Fadil: Retired Brigadier General Mohammed Ali Hamid, former deputy director of military intelligence under Al Mahdi's 1986-88 government; Retired Brigadier General Khalifa Abu Sheneb, a former member of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) operating out of Asmara; Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Ghasy; Retired Police Colonel Salah Al Fahd; Deputy Secretary General of the Democratic Unionist Party Ali Mahmoud Hassanein, who recently resigned his seat in the National Assembly; and Umma Reform and Renewal member Mahdi Bakhiyet, a lawyer. Bakhiyet was arrested on July 15 after criticizing Al Fadil's detention.

Coups Likely an NCP Ruse

¶5. (C) Embassy contacts speculate that the alleged coup attempt was a ruse to distract the public from the political travails of the National Congress Party (NCP). These challenges include the Government's recent acceptance of the UN/AU hybrid peace-keeping mission in Darfur after 12 months of strident opposition, the stalemate in the NCP-SPLM discussions on Abyei, and the incomplete re-deployment of Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) units from Southern Sudan per the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Several sources anticipate additional arrests in the coming days and a potential curfew as the NCP uses the coup as a justification to re-assert its authority. Reports in the last three months of a reconciliation between Al Fadil and Al Mahdi, including a pro-CPA platform, may have spurred the NCP into action. In a July 15 meeting with CDA Fernandez, Al Turabi said the charges were "cooked" and linked them to Khartoum's ongoing marginalization of the periphery. "Most of the people named are pensioners from Kordofan," said Al Turabi. "(The marginalization) is like a cancer that spreads, now into

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south and west Kordofan. The pensioners were just talking, nothing more than that. Security people can create a fiction." Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salahuddin told CDA on July 16 that the conspiracy had been "extremely amateurish" and that Al Fadil was a reckless "failed adventurer" who was desperate for attention.

Comment

¶6. (C) It is significant that the accusation came from one senior Sudanese official who represents the most extreme element in an already unsavory government. Nafie is doing publicly what he does privately--seek to pull the regime to take radical positions that best serve his world view and personal ambition. End comment.

Bio Note

¶7. (SBU) Mubarak Al Fadil is the leader of the Umma Reform and Renewal Party. Al Fadil has served in various national governments, including as Assistant to President Omar Al Bashir (2002-3), the Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade (1988-89), the Minister of Industry (1986-88), and a member of the National Assembly (1986-89). He has a background in the chemical manufacturing industry. Al Fadil fled to Libya after the National Salvation Revolution led by Al Bashir and Al Turabi in 1989. He played an instrumental role in the establishment of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The Umma Reform and Renewal Party split from the mainstream Umma Party in 2003 after a leadership rivalry between Al Fadil and Sadiq Al Mahdi, his estranged cousin. Al Fadil became Assistant to the President in 2002 but was forced to resign

after visiting the U.S. against Bashir's wishes. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and economics from the University of London in 1975. He also holds degrees in political science from the UK and Germany. He is the brother-in-law of Presidential Advisor Ghazi Salahuddin.

18. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
FERNANDEZ